



Times Square Car Bomb May 1, 2010

Information Cutoff: Date: 12:00 p.m. 5/2/2010

NYPD SHIELD intelligence briefs are current as of the information cutoff date. The information is therefore preliminary and subject to further analysis and revision.

Summary

- At approximately 6:30 p.m. on May 1, a Nissan SUV containing a potentially incendiary device was parked in Times Square.
- An NYPD officer was notified and noticed the smell of gunpowder and began clearing the area.
- The SUV contained propane cylinders, gas containers, gunpowder and a timing device.
- It was rendered safe and removed from the scene.
- A claim of responsibility was made on behalf of the Pakistani Taliban on May 2.



Details

- At 6:28 p.m. on May 1, a surveillance camera captured a dark green Nissan Pathfinder driving west on W.45th St.
- Two minutes later the SUV was left running with its hazard lights on at the southwest corner of W. 45th and Broadway.
- A T-shirt vendor notified an NYPD officer who smelled gunpowder and summoned additional personnel.



Details

- NYPD Bomb Squad personnel broke the SUV's tinted windows and sent in a robotic device to observe its contents.
- 3 propane canisters, 2 five-gallon cans of gasoline, gunpowder, and two battery-powered clocks were observed inside.
- FDNY personnel heard 'popping sounds' but the device failed to ignite.
- The device was believed to be incendiary rather than explosive.
- The device was rendered safe and the vehicle was removed at about 6 a.m. on May 2.



Vehicle Details

- The vehicle was a dark green Nissan Pathfinder with dark, tinted windows.
- Its license plates were from a Ford pickup truck taken to a junkyard in Bridgeport, Ct.
- The Nissan's vehicle identification number (VIN) had been removed.
- There is currently no information concerning its occupant/occupants.
- There has been only one claim of responsibility so far. On May 2, a posting on a jihadist website featured a link to a video claiming that the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) was responsible.



Similar Plots

- In June 2007 two Mercedes Benz sedans filled with gasoline containers and initiating devices were parked outside the Tiger Tiger nightclub near Piccadilly Circus; they failed to ignite.
- In the same month, a Jeep Cherokee loaded with propane canisters was driven into the doors of Glasgow Airport.
- The perpetrators of both incidents were believed to be inspired by al-Qa'ida and motivated by the fighting in Iraq.
- Dhiren Barot, a.k.a. Abu Eissa al-Hindi, was convicted in 2006 in the UK for terrorist activity. He was directly connected to al-Qa'ida and among his plots was a plan to pack limousines with gas cylinders and explosives and detonate them beneath major office buildings.





Conclusion

- Vehicles loaded with incendiary materials are easy to procure and could potentially cause significant damage.
- But as was the case in London and Times Square, timed ignition of incendiary devices is difficult at best.
- Ordinary automotive vehicles draw little attention, however, vehicles operated in out of the ordinary ways, such as left running unattended or parked in a hurried manner, call for attention.
- **If You See Something, Say Something! Report suspicious activity to: 1-888-NYC-SAFE (1-888-692-7233)**



Sources

- “‘Very Lucky,’ Mayor Says, After Bomb,” New York Times, May 2, 2010.
- “Times Square Car Bomb; Cops Evacuate Heart of NYC after ‘Potential Terrorist Attack,’” Daily News, May 1, 2010.
- “Authorities Search for Suspects after Times Square Car Bomb Scare,” Christian Science Monitor, May 2, 2010.
- “Echoes of 2007 London Attack in Times Square Car Bomb,” The Times of London – Times Online, May 2, 2010.



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